

Team,

Sylvia and I attended the Social Justice Matters quarterly meeting on Dec 16<sup>th</sup>. At an earlier 8<sup>th</sup> Principle meeting I was asked to reach out to this local organization to find out more about what local groups are doing about dismantling racism.

Social Justice Matters (SJM) is the local Scotch Plains Fanwood Racial Justice organization. (<https://www.socialjusticematters.org/about-us>)

At this meeting various committees reported. Here are the highlights:

- MLK Day of Service Jan 18th - Programming and volunteering opportunities. In addition to signing up for volunteer opportunities there are two educational programs in the afternoon 1) one on policing and 2) micro-aggressions.

Here is the link for the MLK activities : <https://spfmlkday.wildapricot.org/page-859218>

- Juneteenth Celebration - Juneteenth is the holiday celebrating the emancipation of those who had been enslaved in the United States. It just became an official NJ Holiday. SJM planning a big celebration. (I signed up to help with this committee)
- Policing committee - This committee is actively working with local police to help them to rethink how to engage in with the community. They are developing a civilian review board for Scotch Plains and Fanwood and working with police in other local communities to act as a community voice to engage in de escalation.
- Education Committee - plan education programs. Past programs include programs such as "Dialogues on Race", systemic racism in health, housing and policing
- TRHT committee (Truth Racial Healing and Transformation) - institutionalize their support for efforts to promote racial healing, education and community engagement against racism. There is an effort to create a national TRHT initiative and our Senators such a Cory Booker has been supporting the initiative. (more about this at this link <https://www.socialjusticematters.org/trht>)

They are also looking for support with regards to developing more of a social media presence, grant writing, advocacy, reparations and food insecurity.

I became a member of SJM. Membership requires paying a membership fee and joining a committee. Let me know if you are also interested in getting involved in SJM.

Denise